

2005 Clinical Education Grant Program



South Central (VISN 16) MIRECC Clinical Education Grants Program

I. Background

Formed in October 1998, the South Central (VISN 16) Mental Illness Research, Education, and Clinical Center (MIRECC) is one of ten MIRECCs in the Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans Health Administration. Congress mandated the establishment of MIRECCs to improve the provision of healthcare services to mentally ill veterans through research and education and through the development of improved models and systems for delivering mental healthcare in VHA. The mission of the South Central MIRECC is to “close the gap” between what research demonstrates is possible with mental health treatments and what actually occurs in daily clinical practice.

II. Purpose

The South Central MIRECC formed the Clinical Education Grants Program to support and encourage clinicians and educators to develop innovative educational interventions, enhance current educational materials or programs that target under-served or hard-to-reach populations and/or their families, or improve the system of health care delivery. The Clinical Education Grants Program supports the mission of the MIRECC and the VA’s Action Agenda by funding projects designed to:

- improve treatment adherence and medication compliance;
- enhance patient input in treatment and involve the family;
- destigmatize mental illness;
- provide greater knowledge and understanding of mental illness and treatment to patients, their families, providers, and trainees; and
- coordinate with community resources.

* This year, consistent with VA’s Action Agenda, the MIRECC encourages proposals that adopt psychosocial rehabilitation or recovery-based models of care. These models take a holistic view of the veteran as a multi-dimensional individual that includes physical and mental health, spirituality, occupational functioning, social functioning, etc., within a family and within a community. Psychosocial rehabilitation and recovery-based models view these areas as connected, strive to improve general functioning, and promote hope.

Grants can be employed in four basic ways, although you not limited to these approaches:

1. *Apply an existing educational program in a new way*
2. *Develop a new educational program and pilot it* (e.g., create and assess a new patient education program or method of information delivery – that was not available – to improve treatment adherence);
3. *Purchase and evaluate commercial education materials* (e.g., evaluate the effectiveness of adding commercial videotapes on stress reduction to an existing anger management group); or
4. *Update an existing education grant program.* Previous grant recipients are invited to apply for a second education grant that can: a) update previously developed grant materials, or b) repackage existing materials and compare them to the original materials (e.g., develop an educational video and compare its effectiveness to an originally developed workbook.

III. Eligibility

A single individual is the “Principal Applicant,” although the project may be a group effort. Collaboration across VA sites in VISN 16 and 17 (South Central Texas) is both strongly encouraged and given a high priority for funding.

Awards are made to VA staff in VISN 16. Staff can include student trainees, however, **a permanent VA staff member must be listed as a co-applicant.**

Awarded applicants are “Affiliate MIRECC Educator(s)” during the course of their project.

IV. Award

An award is between \$1000 and \$7,000, depending on the scope of the project and budget appropriateness.

V. Use of Grant Funds

Congress and VHA have provided some strict regulations on how clinical education grant funds can be used. The table below is designed to provide you with some general guidelines on items that can and cannot be purchased with MIRECC Clinical Education Grant funds.

You CAN purchase these items	You CANNOT purchase these items
👍 Travel of a non-VA employee to a VA site (e.g., a guest speaker)	👎 Travel by VA employees
👍 Hiring of a temporary VA employee (please note that approval from your HR department is required and it is a very cumbersome and slow process)	👎 Honorariums to VA Employees
👍 Equipment to be used in the project	👎 Food (including participant snacks)
👍 Commercial materials to be used in the project	👎 Lodging
👍 Professional services (e.g., voice recording; computer programming; web page design) that cannot be provided by your VA facility. Please check with your facility to ensure that this service is not available.	👎 Photocopying or binding that can be provided by your VA facility
👍 Material reproduction that cannot be provided by your VA facility. Please check with your facility to ensure that this service is not available.	👎 Salary time of a VA employee
👍 Additional materials and/or supplies that are not available at your facility and are a part of your project (e.g., anatomical models and condoms to demonstrate safer sex practices)	👎 Reproduction of electronic data (e.g., audiotapes, videotapes, CDs) that can be provided by your VA facility

A Few More Notes About the Budget Justification

The award can purchase supplies and equipment. In the justification explain why you need these items and whether they are available through your Service Line. For example, if your project requires the use of a dedicated computer, please explain how the computer will be used in the project and whether or not a computer is available for you to use on this project at your facility.

To help you structure your budget, a blank budget table is provided in Attachment A

VI. Use and Distribution of MIRECC Clinical Education Grant Products

All products developed with support from a Clinical Education Grant (e.g., training program manuals, family education modules, videotapes, CD-ROMs, etc.) are the property of the South Central MIRECC and VHA. As such, the products are not for profit and will be distributed to VA facilities at cost or at no cost to facilities. Products may be posted on the MIRECC web site and shared with other Networks.

VII. How to Apply

A. When are they due and where do I send them??

Applications for the 2005 funding cycle should be submitted by **e-mail** to randy.burke@med.va.gov and must be received by **4:00 PM (CST), August 15, 2005**. Applicants will receive written feedback by September 26, 2005. *Applicants are often asked to provide more information, modify their plan or intervention, and submit a revision.*

When submitting your application, please be sure to include:

- title of the project;
- name(s) of the principal applicant and co-applicants;
- your postal address;
- name of your facility;
- contact phone number; and
- Cc: your service line director for concurrence.

B. How long is the application and what should it look like?

The application should be **1500 words or less** and be typed using a **12-point font** and **1-inch margins**. It should describe your project and include a budget justification describing any supportive materials that you plan to use (e.g., the name of a video or computer software that you will use). A suggested outline for writing your application is given on the next page.

Suggested outline for Applications

I. INTRODUCTION / JUSTIFICATION

- A. Provide a brief statement of the clinical issue or problem that will be addressed by your Clinical Education Grant
- B. What, if any, materials currently exist to address this need?
- C. How does your project meet the MIRECC goal of “closing the gap?”

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

- A. Who will be the target audience (veterans, families, VA staff)?
- B. How many veterans / people will take part in the project?
- C. What do you plan to do in your project? When will you start and finish?
- D. How will you evaluate your project? How will you make sure your project is carried out as planned?; How do you plan to measure your outcomes? How will you know if your project was a success?

III. FUTURE PLANS

- A. How might the MIRECC disseminate the results of your project to other facilities?
- B. What do you think the long-term impact of your project will be?

IV. BUDGET

- A. What materials do you think you will need for the project?
- B. What do you estimate that the project will cost in total?

Tips for Success:

1. Be complete but brief. Reviewers don’t know what you want to do unless you are explicit. Have colleagues read your proposal and tell you what they think it says. Proposals that are vague, general, or duplicate what has already been done will receive poor reviews and low scores.
2. Review previously funded projects and search the Internet, library, and educational catalogs for products similar to what you propose. Use your search to justify the uniqueness of your proposal.
3. Use existing MIRECC resources. One area of difficulty for many applicants is figuring out how they will measure/evaluate the outcomes and objectives of their project. Dr. Snigdha Mukerjee is available to answer questions and provide advice on simple ways to evaluate your project. She is available by e-mail at mukherjeesnigdha@uams.edu
4. Get advice from people who have had funded projects. Contact any of the previously funded applicants. Below is also a short list of people who have received education grants and who are

willing to provide informal consultation. Contact information can be found in the Outlook Global Address List.

Jackson – Dr. Randy Burke, Dr. Jefferson Parker
Oklahoma City – Dr. Michelle Sherman, Dr. Tom Teasdale

Awards will be formally announced in December 2005 with funds for successful applications released in January 2006.

IX. Questions

If you have questions about the application or the appropriateness of your project, please contact Dr. Randy Burke at randy.burke@med.va.gov or 601-362-4471 ext. 1152.

Attachment A: Budget Table

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